

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 3, 2013

Chairman Bill Shuster
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Nick J. Rahall, II
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Water Resources Development Act of 2013

Dear Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member Rahall:

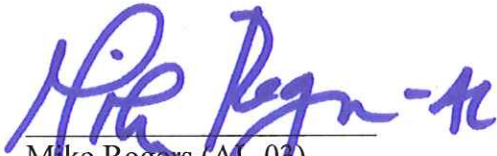
We are aware that your committee is working on a draft Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), and we write to urge you to address an issue in the bill that is of great importance to the State of Alabama.


Many communities in Alabama are downstream from reservoirs in the Atlanta area that are operated by the Corps of Engineers. These projects were constructed with federal taxpayer dollars to support the interests of hydropower generation, navigation support, and flood control. The operation of the projects for those purposes generates substantial river flows that are vital to Alabama's environment and economy.

The Corps of Engineers has unilaterally changed the operation of those reservoirs to support Atlanta's water-supply demands and, in so doing, has substantially diminished river flows in Alabama. Although the Water Supply Act of 1958 allows some use of federal reservoirs to meet local water-supply needs, Congress reserved to itself the authority to approve significant water-supply uses at such reservoirs. The Corps of Engineers, however, has interpreted the Water Supply Act to give it almost complete discretion to use federal reservoirs to support local water supply.

We urge your committee to include language in the WRDA bill that sets clear numerical thresholds on the limits of the Corps' authority to use federal reservoirs for local water supply without congressional approval. Because federal reservoirs are built to support important federal purposes with federal tax dollars, we believe it is imperative this legislation include provisions restating that only Congress has the authority to make significant alterations of such reservoirs to serve the local purpose of water supply.

Sincerely,


Mike Rogers (AL-03)
Member of Congress


Jo Bonner (AL-01)
Member of Congress


Chairman Bill Shuster and Ranking Member Nick J. Rahall, II

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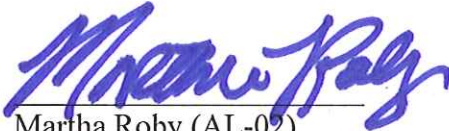
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Mo Brooks (AL-05)
Member of Congress



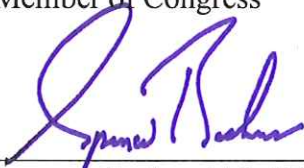
Robert Aderholt (AL-04)
Member of Congress



Martha Roby (AL-02)
Member of Congress



Terri Sewell (AL-07)
Member of Congress



Spencer Bachus (AL-06)
Member of Congress

cc: Governor Robert Bentley